/49 cont./

29| (Guajiro sandals made at home) to protect their feet from the
855 hot, sandy soil. They very rarely use a hat, and at a more advanced age, and at times it is replaced by a kióra /headband/,
[942] but without feathers, as these are a special privilege of the adult to be used on feast days. They go about, then, generally bareheaded and exposed to the strong rays of the sun. Almost at the period of transition from childhood to puberty,
[415] Guajiro boys begin to make use of small woven woolen pouches which are attached to the belt and which serve /50/ as a purse and a depository for charms /coutras/ (in the case of adults), small objects for personal use, etc.

30| Boys do not use necklaces. Only, and with the sense of
778 their being a protection rather than an ornament, they wear
855 when they are small jet beads on their wrists, small pieces of coconut husk or coral, a piece of wood of medicinal value to prevent grippe, or some object of magic value, things they leave off using toward their fifth or sixth year.

29| With a girl the period of complete nakedness is shorter
855 than with a boy, although there are regions in the peninsula where they may be older, owing to the poverty of the relatives, who are unable to supply them with clothes until they are past the average age for dressing. The girl is dressed in a garment which is practically a man's guayuco and which, later when an adult, she uses as an undergarment, like a pair of pants. It is a belt of white or striped cloth, doubled and placed between the legs, held at the ends to the waist by what is called a sirapo, a kind of wide, heavy belt made of glass beads or seed-glass beads of all colors. The girl's trunk remains naked until much later. During the prepubertal period, when the development of the mammary glands begins to be marked, she puts on a sort of blouse made with the technique for hammocks (horizontal threads held together by some cross threads), which is intended, as the girl is already beginning to be initiated into the art of weaving and consequently is in a stooping position much of the time, to keep her from becoming humpbacked; also for reasons of modesty and because this blouse, as

[42 cont.]

785 765 they put the child inside one of the animals sacrificed for the occasion, taking care that the body of the animal is still warm, with the object that the child enter in the warmth.

If they cannot take the sick child to the place where the ritual ceremony is to be performed, the parents take a bone of the sacrificed animal, let it dry, and later cook it in a large quantity of water, with which they subsequently bathe the body of the child. The succesful effect should be attained at the first bath or after several successive ones.

755 There is another system of curing this sickness, which the Guajiro call "the chill of the tomb." The presence of the parents at the wake has infected the unborn child with the coldness of the tomb which the dead man is about to occupy. For this reason, the important thing is to drive out the cold, for which they resort to the substitute (when there is no possibility of an exhumation ceremony in the near future) of digging a hole in the earth, approximately the size of the child, placing him in it and then covering him up to the neck with the displaced earth.

755 764 978 In any case, as can be seen, the second method is no more than a substitute for the required and definitive remedy. In the first case there are two magic associations: the participation, passive and involuntary, of the dead man in the transmission of the sickness; and the other, more active, of the cure through the sacrificed animal, which, as we noted, participates in the taboo by virtue of the sacrifice. If it were simply a matter of the cold-hot association, that is, if the idea were to drive the cold out of the sick child's body, the most practical and rapid way would be the third, that is, to put the child's body in an excavated hole and cover it with the displaced earth, so that heating by the sun may bring about the desired effect, particularly if one takes into account the high temperatures that are reached during [43] the day in the semidesert of La Guajira. But there is something more: there is the magic character of the ceremony of the sacrifice -- which is undoubtedly diminishing through the effects of acculturation -- but of which there remains at least the idea of utilizing the magic power of the sacrificed animal, or part

[43 cont.]

755 of the same – the bone which is left to dry and then cooked –
764 which also participates in its power, because in the primitive
778 mentality the part is accepted as the whole, or at least shares in the power of the whole, even at a distance.

556 Another meaning that the sacrifice of animals has is that
836 related to the status of the individual in his other life. One of
837 the points of reference of status in La Guajira is wealth, which is nearly always equivalent to the possession of a larger or lesser number of heads of livestock. Livestock represents, in certain aspects, Guajiro currency, since interchanges, blood payments, etc., are always based on a definite number of heads of livestock, besides of course necklaces of tuma, gold, etc.

556 Naturally, if an individual occupies a certain social posi-
764 tion in life, it is logical that when he goes to the other life, to
775 the world of the dead, he occupies an identical position or tries to better the one he had in life. This, then, is one of the reasons why certain of his possessions are placed near or in his tomb, and to complete his "equipment" for the next world, a number of animals are sacrificed, the higher his position in society the greater the number, so that these may give him the desired social position in the world of the spirits.

764 The association, then, is easy to establish: If the individ-
775 ual in dying passes to a new life similar to the one he led on
815 earth, then the animal, a living being with a soul like the man, on dying must also pass on to occupy a place in the other world. This, of course, is only our own supposition. But we find no other explanation of the Guajiro statement that the animals should be sacrificed so that they can accompany their owner to the other world and give him an advantageous position among the other spirits.

764 The sacrifice implies above all an act of magic. The fact
784 that the dead man's close relatives must not eat the meat of the
778 sacrificed animals, because it would be like eating the flesh of their relative himself, establishes the relation between the owner and his property in the sense that the latter shares his personality. And as the dead man is sacred, or at least taboo, that is, sacred in the sense of being untouchable, so also are the things that he owned; the animals – which are [44] to accompany

[44 cont.]
him on his journey and which remain his only possessions, since the rest will be distributed among his heirs — take on the quality of untouchables.

2. The poisoned arrow. The second sacrifice about which we gathered information has a greater importance than the previous one for two reasons: first, because it is the sacrifice of a human being, and second, because it is linked to a series of ceremonies set in motion to obtain a certain end, the deadly power of the imára, or poisoned arrow, or better said, the magic arrow.

This sacrifice, so far as we could observe, is no longer practiced in La Guajira. According to the information gathered, it was practiced exclusively by the Kusina Indians, inhabitants of the sierra of that name. They were bellicose Indians, warriors, robbers, and animal stealers, who kept the other communities of the peninsula in an incessant state of tension by their attacks and evil-doings. We think it interesting to point out here that these Indians, commonly known as Cocina, according to all the information obtained did not constitute in themselves a separate cultural group. Their language was the same as that of the other Guajiro; their customs were relatively the same, and their physical type identical. Everything seems to indicate that they were no more than social outcasts, all those who, for crimes committed and not paid for in accordance with established laws, had found it necessary to unite themselves into societies outside the law. The question is not entirely clear, and it will be difficult to make it so because Kusina Indians are no longer found in La Guajira.

Bows and arrows stood out among the arms used by the Guajiro, (We say "stood" out because now they chiefly use rifles of foreign make). One of these arrows, which they call poisoned, bears the name of imára. The shaft of this arrow is made of a thin piece of wood taken from the tree called parára and measures approximately 80 centimeters in length. At the upper end of this sharpened shaft is placed poison of a ray or the bone of a poisonous serpent. This imára is what the Kusina Indians used as a last resort in their battles with Whites or with

[44 cont.]
411 some of the Guajiro communities during their pillaging expedi-
648 tions.
724 The value of the arrow, considered to be infallible,
411 stemmed from the extremely important fact that its tip was
anointed with the blood of a sacrificed child. The arrow took
● 782 into itself, by magic contamination, the sacred and impure
782 quality of the sacrificial ceremony performed on the child,
[45] a quality of extreme value when one realizes that the
child's own father performed the sacrifice.

782 The process is as follows: The Kusina, according to the
story of our informant, an Indian woman from the Sierra de Jarara
who had heard from her parents a great deal about the customs
of these Indians, with whom the people of the Sierra had had
dealings, were accustomed to take a male child from their own
family. They carried him off to some distant hills situated in
the interior of the Cocina sierra. They took him up a particular
mountain, and on its summit under a pó (a special tree) they
killed him. He was killed in this way: They blocked up his
nostrils and squeezed his throat with their hands, that is, they
strangled him, and with a pointed stone they struck his forehead
several times continuously until blood flowed from it. This
blood, which was exactly what they wished to obtain in the
sacrifice, was not allowed to spill, but was gathered very care-
fully in a very clean utensil. In recent times the blood was col-
lected in an empty tin such as those used for sardines or salmon,
but it is to be supposed that in olden times a special ceramic
container was used. Once the blood had been collected, they
put it to boil in the same utensil in which it had been collected.
Next they put it in another that in modern times was a glass con-
tainer, although in former times it must have been of some other
material, in order to preserve it. This utensil which contained
the boiled blood of the boy was kept in the woods among stones
593 which they collected for this purpose. The executioner, who was
none other than the boy's father, had prepared beforehand a
278 quantity of arrows tipped with the poison of a ray, which he later
438 anointed with the blood and distributed among the rest of the
Kusina natives or the Guajiro in general, in exchange for live-
stock. The price that had to be paid for one of these arrows was

[77 cont.]

762 inflicted on the objects which were the principal active agents
768 in carrying out his fatal determination. As the form of suicide
672 that is practiced in La Guajira is almost exclusively that of hanging, they proceed to burn the branch on which the individual hanged himself and the rope which he used, because, they say, these were the direct causes of his death.

With respect to the punishment carried out on the objects
682 (inanimate to us) which served for the carrying out of suicide,
672 several suggestions may be made. In one case, the "compensation payment for blood" may be recalled, the established customary law of this community by means of which whatever spilling of blood that may be caused in any person, voluntary or involuntary, directly or indirectly, has to be paid for in accord-
[698] ance with a valuation decreed by the so-called "arbitrators," or "palabras," who are nothing more than intermediaries named by the family groups affected to settle the affair peacefully. This payment is considerable when the blood spilling ends in the
682 victim's death. Should the murderer refuse to pay the sum ar-
628 ranged for (whether in livestock, necklaces, precious stones, etc.), then the members of the victim's family group take vengeance on him personally and kill him. All this naturally ends in war to the death, or putchi, between the two extended family groups, an occurrence which is extremely frequent in La
682 Guajira. Hence as "compensation payment for blood" cannot
762 be claimed, from these objects (the tree and the rope), they are
672 punished in default by destruction by fire. This hypothesis is reinforced, if we remember that to the Guajiro Indian, as well as
[794] to most primitives, objects — which to us are not alive — are
[798] able to exercise both good and bad influences on the individual (Cf. "Sickness and Medicine" and "Amulets, Fetishes, Talismans"), because they possess a spirit — a kind of mana, or immaterial force, which surrounds and animates everything.

Another suggestion that could be made with respect to the
762 destruction of the objects used by a suicide is the following: As
783 these articles were in direct contact with the dead man, and particularly with a corpse as dangerous as a suicide is, it is necessary that they be destroyed so that the contamination

[104 cont.]

226 751 [177 184] Never again during our visit did we come across this type of magic object, which leads us to believe that it does not belong to the Guajiro cultural whole, but that it is due rather to the influence of the mulattoes of the coast who, as is well known, are extremely superstitious.

*756 778 Charms used to call spirits. The use of these charms, to which we have referred on other occasions, is limited to shamans. They use them to facilitate the arrival of their protector spirits when they are in a curing trance or are carrying out any of the functions related to their status. Up to the present we have not arrived at a satisfactory explanation of their influence on the spirits, but we might now bring together the few data we do have. One of the female shamans who served us as informant and who [776] came from the Sierra [de] Jarara possessed charms to attract her spirits. She explained to us that as those spirits are assistants, some to young shamans, some to old ones, the charms to facilitate the arrival of their spirits are also of two classes: for young shamans and the other for old ones.

The charm is made from the leaf of a plant called in Guajiro [824] morõno, which is found in abundance on Itojoro Hill. A woman expert in such articles makes them there [105] by grinding the leaves of the plant to a paste and shaping this into a rounded form which she keeps in a small bag of red thread. The larger ones are reserved for the older shamans, and the others, combined with some of the former, are for the younger.

778 789 [325] [532] [173] The guará or guale. The guará or guale, difficult to find at present, is a kind of idol made from solid gold or silver and of which only a few examples exist as they are no longer made. This small idol is an anthropomorphic representation in fetal position, and it does not seem to be an autochthonous product of the Guajiro as they themselves assert that these idols come from their distant ancestors, by which they mean the Arhuaco of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.

This fetish is known sometimes by the name Mareiwa, a divinity or spirit similar to the idea of God but which appears to be nothing else than the spirit of Rain, as we shall see further ahead (cf. "Mareiwa and Wanurú").

[105 cont.]

The owners of this idol — that no one is allowed to look at — keep it jealously guarded in a coffer, from which no one can withdraw it. With it they carry out on certain occasions some curious rituals such as carefully washing it and then exposing it to the sun's rays. When the summers are harsh and long, they bathe the idol, which they say makes it happy, and they then can ask it to send rain.

The small number of these little idols and the ignorance of the natives regarding their origin makes us believe that they are a foreign element, at least with regard to formal representation, which we consider to be the product of acculturation. The possibility that these objects have come from the ancient Arhuaco is also very remote, as we have found no trace in the literature dealing with this group of anything similar to such small idols.

Moreover, objects of gold are so few that at present they are restricted to necklaces, which are highly esteemed and inherited through the maternal line. But it appears that previously there were other golden ornaments other than the necklaces, as Ensign José Nicolás de la Rosa affirms that on a certain occasion "all the population of Río de la Hacha went to war against them, and the struggle was so fierce and bloody that the Guajiro asked for a truce, offering never again to act so treacherously toward the subjects of the King of Spain, and as a sign of this intention and as compensation for the death of Tomás (Quintero), they delivered to his Majesty [106] a two-headed golden eagle, the jewel being deposited as a hostage to assure the keeping of the peace in the Royal Treasury." (62)

62. De la Rosa, José Nicolás. Floresta de la Santa Iglesia Catedral de Santa Marta [Treasures of the St. Marta Cathedral], 2d., IV, 213.

Up to now we have not been able to discover the historic value of the small idol called guará or guale, and we continue to incline toward our first opinion that it is a product of acculturation.

[119 cont.]

787 interpretations, will suffice to show that the life of these Indians is built around natural and supernatural phenomena impregnated with a magic factor, and that it is difficult to separate them.

789 826 Other magical acts. The belief exists among these natives that to eat another person's leavings of food implies the acquiring of his qualities. Thus, if one eats the leavings of someone having white hair, one's own hair will become white. Women are therefore very addicted to eating food left by white women when they visit them because they want to obtain a paler complexion. It is also quite common among the men to eat food left by those who are distinguished for their bravery because by this they may acquire some of their courage. This belief extends to everything that may have contact with the person's mouth or breath. Cigar and cigarette butts have this same virtue. They also believe that if an Indian smokes a cigarette butt that has been thrown away by a foreigner, he will acquire one of the qualities of that foreigner — his beard.

● 778 789 This gives us a clue to the existence of what some authors have called mana. It is nothing more than a memory which shows itself in the magic phenomena we have been describing. The idea is not clear but it may be presumed to have existed in former times. Mana is a force that transmits qualities; it is both energy and vitality, which in spite of being intangible impregnates everything it touches. It can be absorbed or acquired in different ways, and from this we derive the explanation which has been given for cannibalism in some primitive tribes. Its concomitant effect is that it has led the Guajiro to keep one of the aspects of this idea: that food, and in general all objects that have been in intimate contact with a person who has certain characteristics, superior in the eyes of the native since he wants them and would feel more complete with them, bring him that force, that singular essence, through magnetization — permit us the term for its graphicness — which it has acquired by touching the possessor of such qualities. [120]

The object, or the food, has robbed, so to speak, a little mana from the individual who was in intimate contact with it.

• • •

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

quarrelsome, the parting drink of spirits having had its effect. One old man after much swaying in the saddle was finally thrown off by his jibbing mule. He landed in a prickly bush and became frantic. He wanted to see blood. Luckily his weapons were on his saddle, but he managed to remove one of his spurs and began stabbing with it at those who were trying to help him up. Francisco received a jab, but he and a couple of others managed to overpower the old ruffian, whom they bound and tied to his saddle. Then his wife led him and his mount away.

One by one the groups went off in their various directions. We came to the rancho of the young Indian, our new friend. He had several big huts, built on the sand, where there was no greenery or shade. He explained that when the rains came, it did not become swampy there, as in most other places, but the water ran through the sand and you could walk dry-shod. There were looms in several of the open huts. At one sat our host's young, light-complexioned wife, who undoubtedly was a great beauty by Guajiro standards, and in another his aged mother with a wrinkled clever face.

We were offered goat's milk as a refreshment. I was always amazed at the care with which these Indians collected the small quantities of milk the goats yielded, for each gave a mere squirt. We took a gulp of goat's milk in order to avoid having to drink spirits.

The women were in a great bustle, evidently getting a spread ready. The Guajiro are hospitable, and when strangers or friends come they must have the best the house can provide. If need be, the host gives up his own hammock and lies on the ground.

Our host had plenty of hammocks. After resting a while, my wife went inside to look at the weaving, while I produced one of the pistols I had bought at an auction and demonstrated it, shooting a couple of shots, the noise and smoke of which appeared highly satisfactory to our host. Hastily he drew me aside and whispered that he had something that ought to interest me. He had *snuff* and was willing to part with this precious, sought-after article in exchange for my noisy pistol. After all I had a companion without a

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

wife and he perhaps could do with it. I knew what unu was, but had never expected to be offered a secret magical object by an Indian who scarcely knew me.

Unu was one of the many *cóntra* or instruments of magic used by the Indians either to protect or help the possessor. Unu stimulated love. The Guajiro have not only their old Indian magic, but some of Spanish-Moorish and African negro origin. Where these cóntra are concerned, it would be most interesting, though difficult, to find out which were of red, black or white origin. They differ in character, but one and all can be lent or hired to a person of the same sex and can be used by that person with as much effect as when used by the owner himself.

A unu love magic was most difficult and expensive to acquire. The equivalent of £30 or £40 was the current price, while the owner will normally charge £10 or £15 if he hires it out. A cóntra must not be shown to any unauthorized person, as its power may then transfer itself to the person who happens to see it.

Love talismans were of different kinds. That considered to be of the best quality was a tiny pouch containing small pieces of what looked like the droppings of some sort of lizard. The magic stuffs of Guajira often imitate the excrement of various animals. Others consist of little stones in a glass bottle, or a decoction of herbs, which the person on whom the magic is to be worked has to take or wash in. One powerful and unfailing love specific is the hair clippings of the confined majayura girl, mixed with the blood of humming birds and other ingredients, but that can only be used on the girl in question. With her, however, it cannot fail.

The love magic the young Indian now said he would give me was one of those little pouches, thus very precious. He was willing to let it go because he liked my pistol so much. He had no further need of a love specific now that he had got himself a beautiful wife with its help—and, he might have added, thanks to a good supply of cattle. And if he ever wanted another cóntra, well, he knew where to get one. But he would not get any more wives. He was a

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

778 832 Christian now and intended to have done with such things, and the Father had said that it was better to turn to a saint. And, of course, I was asked to say nothing about the transaction—that was always done in such cases.

I, of course, was keen to do business.

[784] 'But remember now not to eat roast meat or maize, nothing that has been in direct contact with fire. Otherwise you may fare badly.'

One has to observe certain rules of diet and behaviour when using a cóntra, but not so long as it lies idle.

The little pouch with the love specific thus passed into my possession, and I gave it our photographer to keep in the pocket of his camera case, as I had done with other small objects.

After we returned to the mission I told Francisco of my acquisition. He did not seem at all surprised, so evidently he and the young Indian had been in touch before the offer was made. I also told Francisco that Gladtvet was looking after the talisman, and he nodded understandingly. Gladtvet had no wife with him and no doubt would like to captivate a nice young girl, if one came his way.

574 778 832 [567] Our host, whom Francisco told me would one day be a chief, asked us to stay the night. He was of course prepared to place a slave at the disposal of the solitary white man as hospitality required, but, he added, the prettiest girl in the house was a debtor-slave, whom he could not order, so the white man would have to charm her, if he wished to have her. It would be a good opportunity to try the talisman I had just acquired. Francisco said afterwards that it would not have been a reliable test of the talisman's efficacy, since undoubtedly the girl would have been very easily conquered by a large silver coin. Altogether, he considered, it would have been more practical for me to have bought a slave for Gladtvet than that expensive love charm, since, as he pointed out, slaves were cheap now, at the height of the dry season, owing to the shortage of food.

It was no use trying to explain to Francisco that this magic talisman, like all the other things I had bought from the Indians, was to go into a museum. He would merely

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

have got the impression that I intended to keep it in a safe place in order to exploit it commercially, that is to say, hire it out to applicants. He could never have understood what a museum was.

We declined our host's invitation as politely as we could. Gladtvet's interest in his female slaves—who now had their faces painted black into the bargain—was very lukewarm.

We were served a dish of goat's meat, from a goat that our friend had been given at the funeral. Unfortunately it was old and tough, and my wife had to leave almost her entire helping. That was not regarded impolite in Guajira. On the contrary our hostess looked delighted and hastily removing it and herself to a very short distance, set about engulfing it. One might have thought that she did not get enough to eat, but no Guajiro wife was underfed in a well-to-do household. Often they had more food than they wanted. Why, then, did she not leave the helping for her slaves? Because she wanted what had been left by the lightest-complexioned woman she had ever seen, since one can become fairer oneself by eating what such a being has touched. For that reason, my wife, as a gesture of politeness, often left some of her food when we ate in Indian houses, to the delight of the women of the household. What I left would have been of use only to the medicine man, and that because I was a learned man.

On our return to the mission, the monks gave us a large piece of beef, which we grilled.

'Ay, ay,' said Francisco after the feast, 'the photographer señor should not have eaten grilled meat. I forgot his cóntra.'

'His cóntra?'

'Yes, he has the cóntra now. He ought to have eaten something else. What will happen now?'

The next day Gladtvet had a pain in his stomach and Francisco became frightened. Francisco had been brought up at the mission and considered himself a good Catholic, but that did not prevent him believing in magic. However, our medicine chest relieved Gladtvet's pains more easily than Francisco expected.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

778 832 Francisco and I had several talks about the love cóntra. He pointed out that it was important for the man or woman wishing to use such a talisman to powder certain parts of his or her body with red achiote powder. He gave me detailed instructions which I wrote down, as Francisco thought, in order to instruct Gladtvet, so that he should be ready, if he discovered a suitable object.

The women have love charms as well as the men. With a really effective one a woman can make sure of her husband's love for ever, or win back the love she has lost. When she intends to use such means, she must keep indoors and diet [784] for four days and nights, not expose herself to the sun nor see another woman's face, and she must avoid all milk and anything roasted. She must bath indoors and powder herself. There is a talisman which the wise women of the Jarará Hills manufacture, a stuff of herbs wrapped in a piece of cloth, which prevents a husband from taking another woman.

778 832 754 Sometimes a woman will make a man fall in love with her as an act of revenge. To do this she must get hold of one of his old sandals or something he has worn. This she burns and resultant cóntra is introduced into the man's clothes or belongings. This often ends in the man becoming mad. A man can also avenge himself by making a girl fall in love with him, if he can manage to get some of her hair clippings. For that reason women hide these most carefully all their lives.

778 832 An Indian, when greatly attracted by a girl, will often make the greatest sacrifices and undergo all sorts of difficulties to get her. Having succeeded, he will often go off quite soon with his herds to some other part of the peninsula. After that he is not heard of again, and his wife is left to support herself as best she can. That shows that she had attracted him by means of a cóntra which had been very effective, but that she had then been incautious enough to let it go from her, or it may have lost its power.

There are cóntras for other things than love, e.g., for luck in hunting and in war, to acquire wealth and reputation and to protect oneself against certain spirts or dangers.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

On two occasions I went out with some hunters who had hunting cóntras. Two had talismans for hares; these were small pellets fastened to the leather shield that protects the arm against the bow string. The pellets were shaped like rabbit's excrement and contained a herb the leaves of which resembled rabbit's ears and which the so-called rabbits were fond of! Another man had a deer cóntra prepared from a creeper. It resembled deer's droppings.

The hunters were quite convinced that the cóntra would give them good hunting, and that by its power their game would be unable to escape them. Thus those cóntra were doubly effective. On neither occasion, however, did we get anything, much to the consternation of the hunters. I think they assumed that my presence had prevented the charms working, and they were astounded when I bought them.

Of other talismans there was one intended to help its owner win races. This consisted of some rattling fruits to tie beside the horse's ear. There was a cóntra for warriors called *rania*, which gave its bearer courage and made him invulnerable. Another, which was very expensive, was said to give the possessor luck in business and gradually make him rich. Having become rich, he could then purchase the most expensive charm of all, that which would bring him respect and power. This latter was strictly personal: an outsider could be harmed by seeing it, especially a thief, and it was not effective except in the hands of its rightful owner. It was contained inside several small bags, one within the other, and what was inside the inmost one was known only to the piache who prepared it. In the talisman that brought wealth there were supposed to be links of gold, the power of which lay in the spells spoken over them. Similarly pearls and little figures made of coconut over which the wise women had spoken spells served as amulets. Amongst other things they protect the wearer against the evil eye, belief in which the Indians had evidently adopted from the Spanish–Moorish superstitions of their conquerors. You can find too the small carved hands that are so typically Moorish, and the most powerful means of averting the evil eye. Yet another is more in the negro style. The skulls of

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

The skulls of
horses are placed round dwelling-places to repulse spirits, which are held to be very afraid of horses, whether alive or dead. When a caravan travels by night, the men with horses are in the lead, and the spirits flee at once. Once long ago the Indians themselves had an almost superstitious dread of horses; that was when for the first time they saw them used by their white conquerors.

It was said that some piaches had in their possession gold statuettes inherited from the 'ancients'. If that was so, they were presumably pre-Columbian objects found in some grave or kept for centuries by some succession of medicine men.

9: Santa Cruz E-5 (1958) 1960
SC13 Goajiro SC13

reported several in the vicinity of the town of Riohacha in Colombia.

Residence is normally matrilocal, although, at present, there is a tendency towards neo-locality. The author has found no case of patrilocality either in the field or in the literature.

The names of the five more important clans in Guajiro society, and those with which we are concerned in this article are: Uriana, Epinayú, Pushaina, Guajariyú, and Epieyú. These designations have lost meaning in Guajiro and not even the oldest members questioned by the writer remember what they mean. The clans also have an animal or plant totem closely attached to food and hunting taboos. How deep this totemic aspect of the clan goes the writer does not know and the two references found in the literature, A. Ernst (1887) and A. Jahn (1927), simply mention the fact without going into details.

Today the clans have no distinct geographic distribution. Members of the different clans are found scattered more or less at random over the whole peninsula, and in both Colombia and Venezuela. This may be due perhaps to the extensive migrations of families within the region in their quest for water for themselves and their domestic animals. This necessity has also probably contributed to the gradual breakdown of the matrilocal residence. The earlier literature suggests that the clans may have had, at one time, certain regional characteristics. Juan de Castellanos cites that the Guajiros living near what is now the town of Riohacha all belonged to the Uriana clan. A. Ernst goes as far as showing a distribution map of the clans. A. Jahn and G. Hernandez de Alba draw their conclusion of geographic distribution for the clans based on the earlier sources but definitely state that today the clans present the scattered distribution the present writer found.

The Guajiro culture may be described in brief as pastoral, with a small-scale supplementary agriculture, especially in the southern part of the peninsula where water and more fertile lands are available. Domestic animals, cattle in particular, represent the foundation of wealth to the Guajiro. His economic position, and likewise his social status, is measured in the number of cattle, sheep, goats, asses and horses he owns. This pastoral complex permeates practically every aspect of the culture.